Saturday
December 30, 2017

TODAY **62 / 43** Partly sunny

SUNDAY **48 / 26** Partly sunny

MONDAY **33 / 23** Partly sunny

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AUSTIN360, E1
OUR CALENDAR: FUN THINGS TO DO WITH YOUR KIDS IN JANUARY

SPORTS, C1
FRANTIC FINISH
Aggies fall 55-52 on late TD in bowl game

AUSTIN360, E1
THE 10 MOST MEMORABLE PRODUCTIONS OF 2017

NEW DETAILS VETERANS HEALTH

VA blasted for $543M tech failure

Inspector general says equipment tracking project plagued by poor oversight and has uncertain future.

By Jeremy Schwartz
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Investigators with the Department of Veterans Affairs have concluded that a half-billion-dollar contract to bring cutting-edge tracking technology to VA hospitals has been plagued by poor oversight and security lapses and has an uncertain future even after VA officials dramatically pared down its scope.

The findings from the VA's Office of Inspector General, released this month, confirm the conclusions of a June American-Statesman investigation, which revealed that, behind closed doors, VA's Austin-based contracting officer worried that the equipment-tracking contract was headed for "catastrophic failure."

In 2012, the VA awarded a $543 million contract to Hewlett-Packard Enterprise Services to implement a real-time locating system, or RTLS, at its facilities and pharmacies to track equipment. The

VA continued on **A5**

Tracking devices, like this one used at St. David's Medical Center, help keep watch over medical supplies and equipment. RALPH BARRERA/ AMERICAN-STATESMAN

WEATHER

Rough rider

A man rides his bicycle through Erie, Pa., as fresh snow falls Friday. The nation's cold weather pattern is expected to continue through the holiday weekend and likely longer, the National Weather Service said, prolonging a brutal stretch blamed for several deaths, crashes and fires. **Story, A10.** TONY DEJAK / AP

Austin's 2018 to kick off with cold wave

Today might see temperatures as warm as 62, but don't swap heavy coats for hoodies just yet:

A mass of frigid Arctic air behind a cold front Sunday is about to chill Texas to the bone.

By the time Austin rings in the new year at midnight Sunday, the local temperature will sink to 33 degrees, but biting north winds at 15 mph will make it feel like 22 degrees, the National Weather Service said Friday.

The agency's extended forecast calls for freezing temperatures in the region until at least Wednesday.

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ALSO INSIDE
» Austin's cold weather shelter plan for homeless kicks in, **B1**

AUTO TECHNOLOGY

Austin plans self-driving vehicle role

City works on variety of initiatives to be key player in rising sector.

By Sebastian Herrera
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At a news conference in the spring, Austin Mayor Steve Adler made a bold statement about the city's future in innovative technology – specifically, its future in the automotive industry.

"Austin," Adler said, "should be to automated vehicles what Detroit was to the last century of automakers."

For years, high-tech and automotive companies have sped toward a future in which autonomous vehicles dominate the market, promising market-ready, self-driving vehicles within the next decade.

In the same time, the city of Austin has been working toward becoming a key player in this technology sector. The city has made headway with the aid of local research institutions, private sector interest, partnerships and a recently published mobility report.

City leaders in October released the 141-page report, titled the "Smart Mobility Roadmap," to discuss the vision for Austin's transportation future and the role self-driving vehicle tech will have in it.

"Many are wondering how and when autonomous vehicles and services will make an impact for

Self-driving continued on **A4**

512tech.com
By Austin American-Statesman

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WATCHDOG COVERAGE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

After 30 years in business, locksmith loses his license – for 1980 crime

State rule adopted in 2014 says any applicant with a house burglary conviction must be rejected.

By Eric Dexheimer
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When Shayne Gatlin opened his locksmith business outside Dallas more than 30 years ago, Fred Akers coached the Longhorns and the Dow Jones industrial average was a tenth its current level. Over the decades, he worked hard and grew his operation to three trucks and a retail shop, eventually acquiring more than 100,000 customers. The Better Business Bureau granted him its top rating.

For years, locksmithing in Texas was unregulated. But in 2004, state lawmakers decided that people trained at picking locks needed to be more closely monitored for the public's safety, and so passed a law requiring those in the trade to hold a government-regulated license. For Gatlin, that meant revealing his embarrassing past: A quarter-century earlier, at the age of 19, he had been the get-away driver for his roommates as they broke into a home. He had spent five years on probation for the crime.

But the Private Security Program, a regulatory arm of the Texas Department of Public Safety

Locksmith continued on **A4**

NATION & WORLD, A2
Gunman opens fire at Cairo church; 9 dead
A man on a motorcycle sparks a shootout in an attack targeting Christians. The gunman and a police officer are among the dead.

NATION & WORLD, A3
Saudi Arabia poised for momentous changes
It announced plans to issue tourist visas, to let women drive and to allow movie theaters to return. It may even get a new king.

BUSINESS, B5
Austin-based Indeed to lease Domain tower
Online job search firm confirms that it is leasing all the space in a new 11-story, 310,000-square-foot building at the Domain.

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